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## **State Fire Marshal Coan Announces National Burn Awareness Week February 5-11, 2006**

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan said, "One-fifth of all burn injuries reported in 2005 were children under the age of 5." Coan is joined by fire, burn and trauma professional across the state in using Burn Awareness Week as an opportunity to educate the public about burn prevention. National Burn Awareness Week starts Sunday on February 5.

### **Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System**

In 2005, 369 burn injuries were reported to the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System (M-BIRS, pronounced embers). All burns covering 5% or more of the body surface area must be reported by physicians and hospitals to the State Fire Marshal. "Scald burn injuries were the leading cause of burn injuries in 2005 causing 35% of all reported burns. Burns from fire were the second leading cause in 2005, accounting for 23% of all reported burns," said Coan.

Coan suggested, "Adults should teach children to 'stop drop and roll' if their clothing catches fire; keep matches and lighters in a high locked cabinet; make sure the home has working smoke detectors; and hold fire drills at home at least twice a year."

### **Hot Liquids Scald Children Under 5**

The leading burn problem in the nation and the Commonwealth is hot liquid scalds to children under five accounting for one of every six and a half reported burn injuries. "Please remember to keep all hot beverages out of reach of young children; do not drink any hot beverages while holding or handling young children; use placemats instead of tablecloths until they grow older; turn pot handles in over the stove; face children away from the faucets in the tub; and never leave a child alone in the tub for even an instant," said Coan offering some burn prevention tips.

### **For More Information, Statistics, and Educational Tools**

For more information about burn awareness week, the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System including the most recent annual statistical report, educational pamphlets that can be used locally, please go to our web page at <http://www.mass.gov/dfs/osfm/pubed/firesafetytopics/index.htm> and click on burn prevention.